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PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES.

LINNEAN SOCIETY OF LONDON.

15 FEB. 1883.—Mr. J. Jenner Weir exhibited a perfect hermaphrodite butterfly (*Lycæna icarus*.) and a blue male and a brown female of the same species for comparison. The hermaphrodite in question possesses two spotless blue wings on the left, and two spotless brown wings on the right, thus being intermediate in color between the two sexes.

A paper was read on the manna insect of South Australia, by J. G. Otto Tepper. This contains observations on the insect in question, and on the peculiar saccharine substance derived from and deposited on various species of *Eucalyptus* trees.

1 MARCH 1883.—Mr. Alfred W. Bennett read a paper "On the constancy of insects in their visits to flowers." He stated as a summary that the different classes of insects show very great difference in this respect. Butterflies show but little constancy except in a few instances; but they would appear to be guided to a certain extent by a preference for particular colors. The diptera exhibit greater constancy, though by no means absolute. A much greater degree of constancy is manifested by the *apidae*: and this becomes all

but absolute in the hive-bee. It is an interesting circumstance that this constancy appears to increase in proportion to the part performed by the insects in carrying pollen from flower to flower. A much larger number of observations is however needed in order to determine with certainty any general law; and especially a careful microscopic examination of the pollen attached to the proboscis, mandibles, legs, and under side of the abdomen and thorax. As respects preference for particular colors, the lepidoptera observed paid 70 visits to red or pink flowers, 5 to blue, 15 to yellow, 5 to white; the diptera 9 to red or pink, 8 to yellow, 20 to white; the hymenoptera 303 to red or pink, 126 to blue, 11 to yellow, 17 to white.

There followed a communication "On the methodic habits of insects when visiting flowers" by Mr. R. M. Christy. The author records in detail the movements of 76 insects while engaged in visiting 2,400 flowers. He tabulates the results and concludes that insects possess a decided preference for a number of successive visits to the same species of flower, although this is not invariably the case. Most of the observations were made on bees, which seem to perform the fertilization of at least one-half of all the flowers fertilized by insects in this country. Butterflies as a rule seem to wander purposelessly in their flight, nevertheless some species, including the fritillaries, are fairly methodic. The author believes that it is not by color alone that insects are guided from one flower to another of the same species, and the sense of smell is suggested. Bees, he avers, have poor sight for long distances but good sight for short distances. Of 55 humble-bees watched, 26 visited blue flowers; 12 of the bees were methodic in their visits and 5 not so; 13 visited white flowers; 5 were methodic and 8 not so; 11 visited yellow flowers; 5 were methodic and 6 not so; 28 visited red flowers; 7 were methodic, 9 nearly so, and 12 not so. Mr. Christy inclines to the opinion (though admitting paucity of data) that bees in a

flight from their nest confine their visits exclusively or principally to only one species of plant.

15 MARCH 1883.—Prof. T. S. Cobbold read a paper "On *Simondsia paradoxa* and on its probable affinity with *Sphaerularia bombi*."

19 APRIL 1883.—Rev. A. E. Eaton gave a digest of an extensive monograph of the *ephemeridae*, or mayflies, Part 1. In this the subject is prefaced by the historical accounts, and his views of the group generally; the genera are defined, and a tabular conspectus of the present known species indicated.

7 JUNE 1883.—A short record of observations on the white ants (termites) of Rangoon, by Dr. Robert Romanis, was read by

the secretary. He details what he saw in what may be termed the swarming of a nest.—Selected from *Zool. anzeiger*.

LONDON LETTER.

EAST DULWICH, LONDON,
JULY 6th, 1883.

Perhaps the most interesting information to American entomologists is that relating to the progress of Godman and Salvin's great work—the "Biologia Centrali-Americana." This has now appeared with most commendable punctuality during the last three years, and the following is an abstract of its progress to date.

Subjects.	Authors.	Nr. of species enumerated.	New species described.	New genera described.	Nr. of Plates.	Nr. of species figured.	Number of figures.	Pages letter-press.
COLEOPTERA:								
Adephaga	H. W. Bates	812	240	7	7	175	175	216
"	D. Sharp	417	282	27	4	66	66	192
Serricornia	C. O. Waterhouse	88	36	1	2	49	40	32
Malacodermata	H. S. Gorham	498	295	13	9	208	221	192
Longicornia	H. W. Bates	837	276	24	15	258	269	224
Phytophaga	M. Jacoby	736	243	2	15	350	374	264
LEPIDOPTERA:								
Rhopalocera	Godman & Salvin	495	29	7	26	222	404	264
Heterocera	H. Druce.	90	5	—	2	14	15	24
RHYNCHOTA:								
Heteroptera	W. L. Distant	574	134	9	21	464	513	232
Homoptera	W. L. Distant	56	20	—	3	42	42	24

To this may be added the first hymenopter contribution of Mr. P. Cameron, which has just appeared. This fauna includes the whole of Mexico and extends as far south as the Isthmus of Darien. Some idea as to the extent of the work remaining to be completed can be gathered from observing

the many families and some orders of insects which have not as yet been commenced. My own contribution devoted to the rhynchota has only just reached the *capsidae*, but it has already dealt with some matters of interest to Nearctic entomologists, such as the discovery of the "Chinab Bug," *Blissus leuco-*